



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL HOSPITAL
3475 N SARATOGA STREET
OAK HARBOR, WASHINGTON 98278-8800

20 Jun 2008

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CULTURAL LANGUAGE POLICY STATEMENT

1. Clear communication is essential in the healthcare business to build the trust and confidence of both our staff and patients.

a. Clear interpersonal communication between staff, patients, and family members is vital to the delivery of safe, quality healthcare - with particular reference to life and death decisions.

b. Clear communication between staff, patients, and family members enhances trust and confidence by ensuring that all parties understand what is being said and by ensuring that our patients and their families understand the care plan and feel at ease in our facility.

2. In the interest of delivering safe quality healthcare while maintaining the trust and confidence of patients and staff, I strongly support the use of the English language to conduct command business. All parties involved in a healthcare interaction (administrative or clinical) should understand the language being spoken. In cases where an interpreter or interpretive services are needed, necessary services will be provided.

3. In non-business interactions, I ask all staff to consider the feelings and perceptions of co-workers and subordinates who do not understand the cultural language being spoken. No one should feel excluded or demeaned because of their inability to speak or understand another language. Feelings of resentment contribute to distrust and divisiveness that detracts from our ability to perform our mission as a team.

4. I expect Directors, Department Heads, Senior Enlisted Leaders and contract officer representatives to share this information with all uniformed, civilian, and contract staff members. For more information, contact HMC Rebecca McClung, USN, Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) Officer (military) at 257-9568; Ms. Kathy Vass, Human Resources Office (civilians) at 257-9916 or Mr. Jamie Canby, Contracting Officer Technical Representative (contract) at 257-9989.


J. A. THRALLS